Hzl, Steve, Maggie

[illegible]: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701::021/473-6133

1/18/68

Mr. Harrison Salisbury
Managing Editor
The New York Times
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Salisbury,

Enclosed is a copy of a letter to Dr. Robert Bahmer, head of the National Archives. I hope you will find it largely self-explanatory. I am sending it to you because in it I refer to the New York Times and its January 6 story.

I am sorry that I do not have the complete story. I have only the jump and would appreciate it if you could send me the entire thing.

In recent months I have become more and more convinced that the regulations are not being observed at the Archives there I am concerned. There have been several cases where documents were made available to me for study and were immediately reclassified when I asked for copies. Also, there has been some partial withholding of files. The explanations offered were, in my opinion, less than satisfactory. In one case, to which I allude, I was kept waiting for quite some time for several documents that had been withheld from a file that otherwise was accessible. In this case I have reason to believe that these documents were made available for what I regard as pre-government use before they were given to me, even though I had asked for them some time earlier.

In the case of the Kennedy family-FBI agreement, I asked for that some time ago. It was denied me. Hence the questions I ask in this letter. Also, on the chance the Times were being used. I believe I should call this to your attention.

One of the consequences of this type of play is to kill the really significant part of the story. Regrettably, the fact of the assassination is so enormous that only the very few of us who have been able to spend the vast time required to get a decent knowledge of it catch these things. In this case, there are two sets of pictures that we are now told are no good. There is no reference to this in the Warren Report, as there should have been. There is no reference to it in the testimony, as there should have been. There is no reference to it in any of the exhibits, as there must have been in any presence of a serious investigation. Nor is there any reference to it in any of the withheld files. I hope others eventually find the indignation I feel that this is the way the murder of a President was "investigated". I have also written Mr. Burke Marshall. I enclose a copy of that letter also. I hope, but do not expect explanations. I also fear that this agreement is but another unnecessary national tragedy.

One of the monstrous ironies revealed by these bad pictures is how the autopsy doctors could "authenticate" them, the word used by the government when the doctors, who had never seen them before, were shown them on their

return to government possession. These pictures were turned over by Silberman of the Secret Service the morning of 11/23/63 before he left the hospital. I have a receipt stating that. But the Archives says they cannot produce for me the receipt he signed. Now the record I have and have had since the spring of 1966 says that the pictures were undeveloped, + just cannot see how an undeveloped negative that later is said to be different any image can in any way be "authenticated".

It is possible I may be able to get to "ew York the end of next week. If I do I will, most certainly, accept your invitation to see you, for there is much of this I want you to know prior to publication of THAT MORNING. I wish I could afford to do that immediately, or that there was assurance that I could sell prepublication rights to some of the documents to finance it. However, in confidence also, I want you to know that I have established that there is no chain of possession on these pictures and X-rays. Thus, it today is not possible to establish that they are, in fact, those of the President's autopsy, that they are all of them, or that none have been switched or added. I have also established that these are and are required to have been permanent government property that no one had the legal right to give away. I therefore regard the entire transaction as illegal. If I had a lawyer would would take the case when I am unable to pay him & Yes I would have filed a suit in November 1963.

If you can tell me the conditions under which the Times got this agreement, whether or not on its own initiative, or whether it was started that way, I would very much appreciate it. I think, also, the knowledge might be helpful to all of us. The coincidence between the release at this time when it was denied me for inclusion in my book, which I had expected to be published before this but which others had a reason to prevent would have to be published, is hard to avoid.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg